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Serial No. 10/780,743

KAS-199

Amendment

Responsive to Office Action dated April 18, 2007

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 - 8. (Canceled)

9. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus comprising:

a plurality of sample probes, each sample probe including a sample probe head
having a sample nozzle for dispensing a sample;

rails, said sample probes being mounted to said rails;

sample probes that move along said rails from a sample suction position to a
sample discharge position; and

a controller for controlling said sample probes to reciprocally move between
said sample suction position and said sample discharge position alternately so as to prevent
said sample probes from colliding with each other,

wherein said rails make a closed loop including said sample sucking position
and said sample discharge position.

10. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said
closed loop has substantially an elliptic shape, rectangular shape, or rhombic shape looking
from above said sample probe.

Serial No. 10/780,743

KAS-199

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11. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein at least one of said sample probes includes a sample surface level detecting function for detecting a level of a sample and transmitting the detected level to said controller.

12. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein at least one of said sample probes includes a nozzle clogging detecting function that transmits a level clog detection condition to said controller.

13. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said controller stops use of any of said sample probes and controls carrying out sampling by another one of said sampling probes.

14. (New) An automatic analyzer including a sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 9.

15. (New) A sample dispensing method for an analyzing apparatus comprising the steps of:

dispensing samples from a plurality of sample probes, each sample probe including a sample probe head having a sample nozzle for dispensing a sample;

Serial No. 10/780,743

KAS-199

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mounting said sample probes to rails and moving said sample probes along said rails from a position for sucking a sample to a sample discharge position; and

controlling said sample probes to move reciprocally between said sample suction position and said sample discharge position alternately so as to prevent said sample probes from colliding with each other,

wherein said movement of said sample probes makes a closed loop including said sample sucking position and said sample discharge position.

16. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said movement in said closed loop is substantially an elliptic shape, rectangular shape, or rhombic shape looking from above said sample nozzle.

17. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 15, further including detecting a level of a sample surface level during the sucking of a sample with said sample probe.

18. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 15, further including detecting clogging in said nozzle.

Serial No. 10/780,743

KAS-199

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19. (New) A sample dispensing apparatus according to claim 15, further including said controlling stopping operation with one said nozzle and carrying out sampling by another said nozzle.